

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A plastic substrate for use in optical instruments, the plastic substrate comprising:

a composite substrate in which fibers are embedded in a resin matrix, the fibers being arranged to extend in two nearly orthogonal directions within a plane of the composite substrate; wherein

the composite substrate substantially transmits visible radiation and has an in-plane retardation of substantially zero; and

the composite substrate has negative uniaxial anisotropy.

Claims 2-5 (canceled).

Claim 6 (previously presented): The plastic substrate of claim 1, wherein the composite substrate functions as a quarter-wave plate.

Claim 7 (previously presented): The plastic substrate of claim 1, wherein the fibers are embedded in the resin matrix as a bundle of fibers, a woven fabric or a nonwoven fabric.

Claim 8 (previously presented): The plastic substrate of claim 1, further comprising a protective coating on at least one principal surface of the composite substrate.

Claim 9 (previously presented): A liquid crystal display device comprising the plastic substrate of claim 1 and a liquid crystal layer.

Claim 10 (original): The liquid crystal display device of claim 9, further comprising a polarizer, which is arranged such that the absorption axis of the polarizer is either substantially parallel or substantially perpendicular to the at least one predetermined direction in which the fibers are arranged.